X 618 171 common descent; the other is that there are proofs that the social strata of the Tenochca community were not social classes, and that therefore their government could not have the character of a "state" if by this we mean that it had a class and non-"gentile" character.

/p. 87/ CONCLUSIONS

/p. 89/ Chapter 10

THE EVOLUTIONARY STAGE OF TENOCHCA SOCIETY

X 618 ●178 Let us now see concisely what are the conclusions arrived at regarding the questions posed upon undertaking this investigation in accord with the theoretical possibilities at our disposal; and try to express the evolutionary stage of the Tenochcan society in accord with such conclusions.

Systemizing our data we can say that:

a) The Tenochcas had permanent structures—the calpullis—based on kinship through common descent of its members, that is, structures which possessed the necessary qualities for accepting that there were indications of clans among the Tenochcas.

b) We can also say that, taking into consideration the different forms which clans can assume, the information which we have regarding the Tenochcan clans present them to us as ambilateral clans with endogamous tendencies, among which, through having as a formative principal the reckoning of closeness of kinship to ancestors, there arose a marked internal differentiation, a veritable pyramid of ranks and of economic positions, the highest position being that of the calpulli chiefs.

c) We can say that there are many indications of there having been a differentiation in rank as between entire clans, the principal one being the one to which the chiefs of the whole Tenochcan group belonged.

d) We can say that there are also indications that the internal differentiation of the ranks of each clan is intimately bound to the differentiation between entire clans in the whole Tenochcan group through the realization of marriages between members of different clans.

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e) We can say, finally, that there are very numerous indications that the principal social relationships of the whole Tenochcan population were /p. 90/ determined by these ambilateral clan structure types which were greatly stratified and had endogamous tendencies. The more important of these relationships determined by the existence of clans were: 1st) Social stratification which was not independent from the clan organization although it had caused many investigators to think that they were real social classes or the beginnings of social classes. 2nd) The social division of labor, not only manual [labor], which had caused some authors to think that there were guilds among the Tenochcas. 3rd) The forms of land ownership, save two exceptions (the parcels of the valiant macehuales and those of the lords not subject to a determined entailed estate), which had caused it to be thought that the ownership of land was the base of the supposed classic type differences. 4th) The territorial division of the population.

Therefore we can affirm that there were clans among the Tenochcas around the time of the arrival of the Spanish; but that these clans were not of the nature of exogamous and equalitarian unilateral clans which have generally served as examples of clans, but were ambilateral clans with a great tendency towards exogamy and strongly stratified through having as their basic principal the reckoning of the closeness of kinship of their members to common ancestors.

Now then, what does all this mean from the point of view of the evolutionary stage of Tenochca society? There are several considerations that we can make in this respect: in the first place, that the Tenochcas were not in the same evolutionary stage as the Iroquois or other similar groups whose structure is equalitarian and democratic, but rather evinced a marked internal and external stratification and were markedly aristocratic. In the second place we can say that the Tenochcas were not in the same evolutionary line of exogamous clans whose structure does not permit of great development through internal evolution, but rather that the Tenochcas were in an evolutionary line of ambilateral clans which has always been susceptible to undergoing great changes. In the third place we can say that these changes —principally in the tributary system, but also in the clan system were in fact taking place in the society of the Tenochcas and that the more important of them were: a) the beginning of the separation of two hereditary strata—the pillis and the macehuales—of a graded [estamental] type; b) the beginning of the social division of labor by groups of a guild type, c) perhaps the beginning of territorial

X 618 178 division based on personal location—as appears to have occurred with the valiants who were not tributary, and with the owners of alienable land; and d) the beginning of /p. 91/ non-communal and non-alienable property, as was that of the nobles not subject to entailed estates. In the fourth place one must note that the beginning of the evolutionary changes permitted by the structure of Tenochca society formed basically by clans was really hardly a beginning, and that it still had not come to constitute a structure which could even be called graded /estamental/ let alone a class type. One also has to note that the premises of productivity of work and of technical advance were not present among the Tenochcas, such as allowed in other parts of the world, the appearance of grades /estamentos/ and of social classes, since among the Tenochcas a) there were no great irrigation works or intensive cultivation, although there was a quite advanced hoe cultivation with horticultural techniques (fertilization, selection, etc.); b) machines were absolutely unknown; d) /sic. :c), or c) omitted in printing/ there were no domestic animals which might have permitted a great accumulation of wealth, etc. Furthermore there were no possibilities that these technical premises were to obtain in the near future, although they were indispensible for a subsequent evolution. It must also be said that Tenochca life had an economic base of cultivation, of artisan specialization, and of division of labor quite sufficient to allow and require a structure as complex as that which appears in the data, and that the economic relations were of a fundamental importance for the social life of the group; but there is no doubt that they had not come to have sufficient force to break with the limitations of an organization based on kinship through common descent.

Of course, to look at Tenochca society, as has been done in this study, isolated from the groups with which it sustained commercial relations and from those bound to it by tributary relations, achieving almost a parasitic life at their cost, is to see it very fragmentarily. The same can be said as to the lack of a complete study of the whole process of the evolution of Tenochcan society. But precisely because of having found that Tenochca society, in its dominant position, still had not changed its clan structure or even enjoyed an economic well-being that other contemporary groups did not enjoy, reinforces the idea for us that they had not reached a level of evolution similar to the high oriental type cultures of India, Egypt, or China. Furthermore we have to think that in the event that the Tenochca society had continued its evolution uninterrupted by the arrival of the Spanish, it

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would have arrived at an evolutionary stage precisely similar to such civilizations, not grounded in great works /p. 92/ of irrigation, but in cultivation by terracing, and by small scale irrigation.

The typical form of the appearance of social classes—that of Greece—is precisely the beginning of the break up of the hereditary limitations of social stratification into grades [estamentos]. In Mexico the falling apart of the clans and the hereditary stratification associated with them began only at the arrival of the Spanish and not through internal evolution but through imposition in a rough manner, and the new social organization spread in a regular and gradual way with the introduction of the new forms of production: the Spanish did not accelerate an internal process already initiated in Tenochca society, rather they introduced forms to which various of the their internal processes could be easily adapted.

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however, was not changed, and no hereditary rights of property were called into existence in favor of the chiefs or their descendants.[33]

For nearly a century after the first settlement of the Mexicans

[33] No mention is made of any tax or tribute gathered for official purposes among the Mexicans until under the last Montezuma, when it is generally admitted, as Gomara says: "That all tributed to the chief of Mexico" ("Conq. de Méjico," p. 345, Vedia, I). Without accepting the views expressed by Robertson ("History of America." Book VII, p. 291. Vol. III, 9th Edition, 1809), who ascribes to the influence of Montezuma a change in the plan of government of the Mexican tribe,—it still appears but natural that as long as the tribe was weak in numbers and resources, the original or typical form of communal institutions prevailed, whereas with increased population and consequent increase of governmental labor the members of the tribe were compelled to provide for the maintenance of their officers and their families. The first step was to cultivate such patches of land for them as they held being members of some calpulli. These lands were the "pillali," commonly treated of as "patrimonial estates." Torquemada, however, says (Lib. XIV, cap. VII, p. 546): "Another kind of lands they called pillali, or, so to say: Lands of Knights ("hidalgos") or nobles. Of these there were two kinds. In the first case the land was inherited with the nobility, and in the other, the chief gave lands to such as had achieved distinction and valor in war, and were ennobled therefor. To these the chief gave lands for their sustenance, but they could not hold renters ("terrazgueros") but might sell to other chiefs, as if the conditional gift from the chief had not existed: and neither of these two classes could dispose of their tracts to any macehual (common man—perhaps from "maitl"—hand, and "cenalli"—shade,—the hand of some one who gives protection or shade), for in that case they lost them, and the chief entered in their possession. *and they were applied to the calpulli in whose area they were located, in order that the said cluster might pay tribute according to the quantity of land contained;*—also, if any one of them died without heirs, the chief inherited" Herrera (Dec. III, lib. IV, cap. XVII, p. 138). "These were lands which went with the Lordship, and which they called lands of the Lordship, and of these the Lords could not dispose, but rented them as they might and the *rents were used in the house of the King, because there, besides all the principals, also ate the travellers, and the paupers,* for which service the Kings were much honored and obeyed. What these rents did not furnish, was supplied by their patrimonial estates." Veytia (Lib. III, cap. VI, p. 195). "For the present we shall but say, that in each pueblo and place there was a tract of land of best quality, which was of the Kings or Lord of the estate . . . . . For the sowing and working of these lands the calpixque, an officer of the republic (state) in each pueblo, daily designated the common people who had to work them, and all the fruit belong integrally to the chief for *the maintenance of his house.*" Ixtlilxochitl (Hist. des Chichim. cap. XXXV, pp. 242, 243 and 244). Bustamante ("Tezcoco en los Ultimos Tiempos, etc." Part III, cap. V, p. 234, etc.). Oviedo ("Hist. gen. y nat." lib. XXXIII, cap. LI, p. 590, of 3d vol.) Now we have already established, that individual tenure of the soil was unknown, it is further proved that the offices were non-hereditary, we cannot fail, therefore, to recognize. 1°. In the "pillali" of Torquemada the original "chinampa" held by chiefs as members of a kinship.

2°. In the tracts of Herrera and Veytia "official lands," specially reserved for the wants of official houses and their occupants. These lands went "with the office."

No date can be assigned to the introduction of this new feature among the Mexicans but we cannot help being struck by the fact that the Tezcucan chroniclers make special mention of it, connecting it with the time when Nezahualcoyotl became chief of Tezcoco (See Ixtlilxochitl "Hist. des Chichim." cap. XXXV. Veytia, Lib. III, cap. VI, p. 195. Bustamante, Part III, cap. V). The connection is *implied* rather than *expressed*, and but *excuses* the suggestion: that such a change might have occurred about the close of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries. Of course we allude here to the Mexicans alone, and not to the tribes of the mainland.

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"Nahuatl" confederacy of the valley of Mexico, that they and their soil were totally independent from the Mexicans.[138] Still, Cortés honestly assumed it to have been a part of the Mexican domain, and on this assumption based his disposition of it, fully convinced that he was performing an act of honest restitution. This gives a measure of the erroneous ideas then prevailing among the Spaniards on the mode of tenure and distribution of lands in ancient Mexico.

Thus a state of things was inaugurated which could not fail, eventually, to create the most unfortunate results. The Indians among themselves were placed on very unequal footings. In some sections the calpulli, even the whole tribe, were left undisturbed, in others their lands were assigned to Spanish individuals. Again, certain tracts were taken away from the communal soil, and became private property of individual conquerors. But the most disastrous influence certainly was exercised by the assignment of landed property to individual Indians. It created an inequality of condition in each and every aboriginal community against which those least favored revolted, whereas the preferred ones, now combining authority with landed property, were tempted to abuse their new position.[139] Of this division and strife among the

[138] In addition to the testimony already adduced, we refer here to the Letter of Fray Toribio (Motolinia) and Fray Diego d' Olarte, dated Cholula 27 Aug., 1554. "All the others obeyed to Montezuma, to the sovereign of Tezcuco, and to him of Tacuba. These three princes were closely confederated; they divided among themselves the lands (countries) which they conquered." ("Recueil de pièces, etc.," p. 403.) In the "Relation of the services rendered by the Marquis of the Valley (Cortés)," executed between 1532 and 1535—and presented to the Emperor by the Licentiate Nuñez, reference is made to the original grant *to* Cortés, of lands containing: "23,000 vassals" which territory included the Tecpanecan pueblos of Cuyuacan and Atacubaya. These pueblos were claimed "through the intrigues of the president Nuño de Guzman and of the auditors Matienzo and Delgadillo" as belonging to Mexico, but the case was tried in New Spain, and Cortés furnished ample proof "how the said lands are distinct, in limits and jurisdiction, from the city of Mexico, and that the Lords of Cuyuacan and Atacubaya always possessed them peaceably and in fact" ("Col. de Doc.," Vol. II, p. 86). If now this was the fact with those two villages, how much more so was it with Tacuba and its surroundings, which were the chief places of the Tecpanecan tribe; as third member of the Nahuatl confederacy of the Mexican valley.

[139] The grant to Cortés mentioned in the preceding note, is an instance of the agglomeration of several pueblos under a single owner. There must have been many more: since he created originally but 200 "Repartimientos" over the whole territory. The Licentiate Cernos, in his letter of 22 June, 1532 ("Col. de Doc.," Vol. II, p. 159), mentions "until 400 persons" of which 200 had to settle in the city of Mexico. The Bishop Fuenleal in his "Opinion" of 1532 ("Col. de Doc.," II, p. 176), mentions (among others) the following Repartimientos: "Huexotzinco to Diego de Ordáz." The province of

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648 178 Aborigines themselves the Spaniards naturally profited for further encroachments. Many "encomenderos" used the authority of the chiefs to turn their Indian serfs into actual slaves, others in turn improved the new perspective opened to the natives towards the acquisition of private lands, for the purpose of undermining the influence and authority of the chieftains.[140] Frequently, also, the ignorance in which the Indians were, as to the

Tepeaca to Pedro Armildez Chirino,— Chilchota to Juan de Sámano, etc., etc. Each of these, especially the first one, comprised several villages, nay a whole tribe.

Compare the letter of the Archbishop Montufar, 30 Nov., 1554 ("Cruautés horribles, etc." Appendix, 253–260). Zurita (pp. 63 and 64). The complaints are principally, against such as held offices under the conquerors, and such to whom lands were given out of the calpulalli. The petition of Montufar is a terrible accusation against the Indian chiefs. Gomara, however, qualifies it as one of the good effects of the conquest that the Indians since that time "hold lands" (Vedia I). Motolinia (Trat. I, cap. I, p. 17) is very severe on the collectors of rent for the whites. But these collectors must have been mostly Indians,— *chiefs*, as he himself acknowledges in his Cholula-letters.

[140] Motolinia (Trat. I, cap. I, p. 17). Montufar (pp. 255–260). Zurita (pp. 63 and 64). Ceynos, Second Letter, 1 March, 1565 (Col. de Doc. II, pp. 240 and 241). Zurita (p. 83) is of special importance, exposing the intrigues of the Spanish conquerors among the Indian communities, inciting the natives to litigations against their chiefs. Mendieta, in his remarkable letter from Tolnca, 1 Jan'y, 1562, to Fray Francisco de Bustamante, commissary general, at Mexico, devotes his principal attention to the pernicious influence of the Spanish interpreters and lawyers, inciting the Indians to litigation before the "Audiencia" and not before the viceroy. He says for inst. (p. 532), "that without comparison their condition and behavior was better at their time of gentility than now. For at the time they were heathens they did not know of lawyers ("letrado" properly men of letters), scribes, nor attorneys, neither of litigations, nor to spend in such (squabbles) their properties and ruin their souls. To-day, since the opportunity is afforded to them, and they being naturally quarrelsome, disposed to tackle and injure each other, they are so fond of it as to have them continually on hand, without cause nor reason, and (such are) always the worst and most abject of the tribe. Therefore not a single community is found in New Spain which is not disturbed, and does not spend nearly as much in litigation as they pay of tribute to H. M., or to the encomendero every year. And since they are of little understanding, and not versed in law, I hold all what the interpreters and attorneys gain by it as so much of a robbery as if they would take it from the houses at night. Such do not even deny their base actions, but confess openly that they do it, without any other excuse than that H. M. gives them permission." On p. 536, he says: "certain particular Indians in all the settlements do great mischief, knowing that they have recourse to the court, and among the pretenses to cover their malice they use two most commonly, which are: demand account of the communal property, pretending that the principals spend it, and the other, to have the conduct of their officers investigated under color that these abuse of their position (power)." Zurita (p. 83), speaking of the intrigues against the chiefs says: "the ordinary tribute and prestations falling, they fall into the most abject misery, become dejected, dare not speak, and do not know where to apply for protection. For all this the rebels do not cause any loss to the encomendero as to his tribute . . . . In this manner they ruin the *chiefs* in a very short time, for all their property consists in the work of their vassals, as soon as that ceases, if it was but for a single day, they lack every requisite for life." (This quotation is in itself, we think, the most ample confirmation of what we have advanced upon the subject of aboriginal tenure of the soil, and fully disproves what has been assumed in regard to the chiefs holding and owning lands of their own). See also Memorial of Bartolomé de Las Casas (Col. de Doc. II, pp. 229 and 230).

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real import and value of landed concessions, was taken advantage of to deprive them of such subsequently, either through litigation or through barter for worthless trifles.[141] Unacquainted with the new order of things suddenly forced upon them, unable therefore to profit by it for subsistence, the natives of Mexico could not help being *degraded* instead of *elevated* and bettered in condition by such a transition which displaced them, in the course of a few years, from a state of tribal and communal society into one of civilization.[142]

Consequently a state of disorganization began to prevail, which threatened to ruin the country. At the same time, however, while the Indians, forlorn in the maze of difficulties in which their conquerors themselves also floundered about, were in a perfectly helpless condition, a sudden protection and relief arose to them. On the 13th of May, 1524, "one day previous to the vigils of Pentecost," there landed at San Juan de Ulúa, a cluster of twelve Franciscan friars, sent to Mexico in response to the original call of Cortès, for the purpose of converting the Indians.[143] These monks

[141] Zurita (pp. 63 and 64). Mendieta (Letter, in Col. de Doc. II).

[142] The Europeans opened a wide field for activity. They were superior to the Mexican aborigines, not only in organization, but especially in mechanical arts and inventions for the purpose of subsistence. It was now required of the Indians to suddenly take hold of all these improvements, which it had taken the Europeans centuries upon centuries to secure through long experimenting,—and to become familiar with them in a short time, as well as to feel happy and contented at once under a state of society which tore asunder all those ties of kinship forming, since time immemorial, the basis of their organization. It was asking too much of them altogether, and if besides what was asked was even enforced violently,—then the degrading consequences could not be avoided. Therefore, the most ardent advocates of the Indian cause took great care to insist upon letting the natives alone in their communities; even prohibiting the access thereto to the Spanish colonists. Bartolomé de las Casas, in his joint memorial with Fray Domingo de Santa Tomás, in favor of the Indians of Peru, written about 1560 ("Col. de Doc." Bibliographical notes, p. XLII,) says: "Lo segundo, que porque los Españoles son siempre del bien de los indios contrarios, y en especial lo son y han de ser impedidores de aqueste negocio y concierto, que han de estorbar por cuantas vias pudieren que los indios no paguen à S. M. ni puedan pagar este servicio; por tanto es necesario que se prohiba que ningun comendero èntre por ninguna causa ni razon en los pueblos de los indios que tienen encomendados, ni sus mujeres, que son las mas crueles y perniciosas, ni negro, ni criado, ni otra persona suya (p. 233)." Alonzo de Zurita, in his memorial written at Mexico between 1554 and 1564 ("Col. de Doc.," II, p. XLVII), insists strongly upon keeping the Indians apart from the Whites (p. 335). In regard to the actual degradation, see Mendieta's letter, of 1 Jan'y, 1592 ("Col. de Doc.," II, p. 332). Motolinia ("Hist. de los Indios de N. España," Trat. I, cap. I).

[143] The Franciscan friars obtained their first concession from Pope Leo X, by a bull dated 25 April, 1521 (Mendieta, lib. III, cap. V, pp. 185–190). This bull was executed in favor of Fray Francisco de Quiñones (de los Angeles), and Fray Juan Clapion. But these fathers never reached Mexico. Previous to it, three Flemish missionaries, Fray Juan de Tecto, Fray Juan de Aora, and Fray Pedro of Ghent had gone to New Spain